The Prince of Wales and the Midinettes, page 1914.

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PUBLISHERS' NOTICE.

The next Issue of "Modern Life" will be published two days earlier than usual owing to the Holidays. It should be obtainable everywhere on Thursday, December 24th.

ROYAL AND SOCIETY NEWS

Exclusive to "Modern Life."

"In France one must not be Unfortunate!"

It was Napoleon III. who said, as he escaped from France, "In France one must not be unfortunate!" That is probably as true to-day as ever it was. And I thought of those words of Napoleon III. as I read in the *Telegraph* the account by the old French woman of King George's visit to the troops in the field. "Tears had come into the eyes of matronly ladies, of wives and mothers whose husbands and sons were fighting in the trenches, and who exclaimed: 'It is King George of England and his soldiers who have come to help us. Vivent les Anglais!'" And when the war is over, it is to be hoped that the French will remember their obligations as well as they do now that they have still to rely upon King George's soldiers for the saving of their country. Not, perhaps, till the war is entirely over will the world learn how dire was the peril of the French when the British forces arrested the German advance to Paris.

* * *

Why the Allies Stand Fast Where They Are.

And even to-day there is a complete accord of feeling amongst the British troops in the trenches that Paris would lie open to the Germans in a "walk-over" if the Tommies were withdrawn from France, for the French soldiers will not stick the trenches at night-time. All these hidden secrets of the campaign will have to be taken into account when the *real* history of the war in France and Belgium is written, for not without such hidden information will it ever be possible for the world to understand why Sir John French is unable as yet to begin a definite march upon the Germans in Belgium. Until the British have an army large enough to trust entirely to itself for the propagation of the campaign they must be content to stand firm where they are.

* * *

British General's Sorrow for His Lost Troops—and Why.

No risks can be taken in the mere *hope* that our Allies will follow where Tommy leads the way. This may seem a trifle ungenerous to the French, but I know what I am saying. I have just perused a secret document, printed by a distinguished British general, of the operations of his cavalry brigade from the time the troops arrived in Belgium, and circulated exclusively amongst the soldiers in the brigade. It is a day-by-day narrative in plain, simple language of the work of the brigade, and one fact stands out in it with painful clearness—that the General is unable to conceal his anger at the way the French cavalry left him in the lurch whenever a difficult and ticklish job had to be done. Hence he bemoans severe casualties to his men which ought never to have occurred.

* * *

The Prince of Wales and the Midinettes.

Everybody is delighted at the way King George's visit to the trenches was received. The Prince of Wales, too, is immensely popular, not only because he is the Edward the Eighth of the next reign, but because he is so nice-looking and so absolutely boyish and unaffected. A pal in the 10th Hussars (the Pragger-Wagger's own regiment, the "Prince of Wales's Own") tells me that the Prince is afraid to go to Paris for fear of the flappers, who would treat him to more kisses than they did the King of Spain eight years ago. The Prince made himself so agreeable during the time he spent at the hotel of the Marquis de Breteuil one summer, that his face is extremely familiar to the midinettes, and if he now showed himself in the streets of Paris he would be "limbed" for love of him! And as the Prince up till now knows nothing about the darlings, it is to be hoped they won't let him go there, for the Parisian shop-girl can be very "indiscreet" when her heart is touched. She doesn't stop and "calculate the consequences" like the cool-headed English flapper!

* * *

A Tit-Bit of Secret History from Buckingham Palace.

Which reminds me that I am now at liberty to tell MODERN-LIFERS a little secret of a highly interesting character. This journal finds its way religiously into Buckingham Palace every Saturday afternoon, and Queen Mary has had more than one good laugh (and more than a dozen mild shocks, bless her!) when looking warily through its pages. And it was subsequent to a family confabulation about what MODERN LIFE said about Lord Kitchener's prohibition of the Pragger-Wagger that it was decided to send him to the front. This incident is fated to be one of historic interest in the biography of our future King Edward VIII., so I will give it you in detail.

* * *

Happy Days at Oxford ended by the War.

When the war broke out the Pragger-Wagger was at Oxford, and in for another full year of life on the banks of the Isis. It had been decided that when the Prince of Wales's regiment (the "Fighting Tenth") returned from South Africa, where they went some years ago from India, the Prince was to receive a Commission in the Tenth, as his grandsire had done when *he* was Prince of Wales, and as King George's dead brother, the Duke of Clarence and Avondale, had done in his own day and generation. The Heir-Apparent always goes into the "Fighting Tenth," but as the regiment was still doomed to obscurity in South Africa, the Pragger-Wagger went back to Oxford till they came home.

* * *

Lord Kitchener up against the Pragger-Wagger.

Then the war broke out. As stated in this journal, no one was so keen on getting to the front as the Prince of Wales. He had not, it is true, done a day's soldiering in his life, but at Oxford he had taken his work with the Officers' Training Corps very seriously, and he had also been drilled in the gardens of Buckingham Palace years before. So, pending the arrival of the Tenth Hussars, they furnished him with a commission in the 2nd Grenadiers, and off went the battalion to Warley Barracks to prepare for the front. Then, to the disgust and mortification of the Prince, Lord Kitchener butted in with an absurd objection to the Prince going to the war. In MODERN LIFE that week I asked this question: "Whether it would not have been more tactful to have sent the Prince to France, and waited till he had learnt his training in the field, though not in the firing line, rather than have published the story about Kitchener intervening to prevent His Royal Highness proceeding to the front?"

Now, strange to say, it was not till MODERN LIFE got to Buckingham Palace that this point of view had been thought of by the King. However, that did it!

THE GENIAL SEASON IN COVENT GARDEN.

The Merry Moke (to portly Dalmatian): "Watcher, Puddin'! Lookin' for a bit of 'olly?"

How "Modern Life" got the Prince His Billet in France.

For another month the Prince remained at the Palace, and one week took over the duties of the officer in charge there. Then, all of a sudden, he went off to the front, provided, as suggested by me, with a job on Sir John French's staff, where he could prove useful, and learn the art of warfare without being a source of embarrassment to the Grenadier Guards. I hope to be pardoned for pointing out that my advice prevailed over that of Lord Kitchener, for when we see how the presence of the Heir-Apparent heartens the troops in the trenches, and makes them realise that the King and his son are with them in all they are doing so nobly for King and Country, I feel proud that I did not hesitate to challenge the value of Lord Kitchener's opinion. Already the Prince has won promotion, though he is not yet a "Captain," as the *Daily News* informed us, but a Lieutenant of the Grenadiers.

* * *

Lady Eileen "Makes Up Her Mind!"

Society has been deeply interested in the romance of the Duke of Buccleuch's wounded brother and Lady Eileen Elliot, who for so many years has been supposed to be eating her heart out over a young subaltern from India, who now lies buried beneath the willows on the Aisne. I first saw Lady Eileen when her father arrived on the Appollo Bunder in Bombay as India's Viceroy. She was then a "perfect peach" of a girl, with the daintiest fair skin you ever saw, large blue eyes, and a classic mouth of a peculiarly pensive and alluring type. Lady Eileen was then twenty-one, and "heart-whole." It was up at Simla that she met the subaltern that danced her into delirium, but she knew it was hopeless. Lord Minto was a very proud man, and he put an end to that little *affaire* by inviting out the young Duke of Sutherland as his Aide-de-Camp. The Duke, then Lord Stafford, nearly "fell in love" with little Lady Eileen—but not quite!

* * *

The Romance of a Shikar Trip in Bengal.

Everything went all right, however, until the Duke went up country on a shooting expedition in the State of the late Maharajah of Cooch-Behar's father. There he met the Maharajah's daughter, Princess "Pretty," and there was nearly an elopement, and the strangest marriage on record. When Lord Minto found it out he bunged the Duke off home instanter, and got Lord Lansdowne's second son, Lord Charles Nairne, out to Calcutta in the Duke's place. Lord Charles FitzMaurice, as he was then known, promptly fell in love with Lady Eileen's youngest sister, Lady Violet, a pretty little thing like a youthful shepherdess on a piece of Dresden china.

* * *

Sweetest of the War Widows.

The marriage was a tremendous event, for Society, both at home and in India, had to shell out presents in their thousands, and it was computed that Lord Charles FitzMaurice and his pretty wife received not less than one hundred thousand pounds' worth of wedding presents. The rajahs, of course, all came up to the scratch, and the wedding was absolutely unparalleled in grandeur and state. It took place in Calcutta, and after Lord Lansdowne had made over the Nairne estates in Scotland to Lord Charles, the latter took the name of Nairne (his mother was Baroness Nairne in her own right), and settled down very happily in the Highlands until the war broke out. Then Lord Charles Nairne went to the front, got killed, and left Lady Violet the sweetest little "widdy" in Britain!

The Mintos' Keen Instinct for the Siller.

The middle sister, Lady Ruby Elliott, had made an equally remarkable match, her husband being the son and heir to the Earl of Cromer, Lord Errington, who is also now fighting for his country at the front. Not much has been heard of the Erringtons since their marriage, which is due to their being so much in Egypt. Now Lady Eileen has accepted the hand of the Duke of Buccleuch's brother, Lord Francis Scott, and so it may be said that though she has waited till past her thirtieth birthday to "settle her fate," Lady Eileen has done uncommonly well, and sustained the Minto traits, which are unbounded ambition and a truly Scottish instinct for "the siller"!

Lord Minto's first domestic economy on reaching Calcutta was to cut down the buttery bills from two rupees to one-eight annas, although the tiffin bill had remained at two rupees from time immemorial at Government House. And by the time Lord Minto arrived in Calcutta, India had suddenly found herself developing that upward trend in prices which has made itself so serious a factor in life there during the last fifteen years. But Lady Eileen Elliot is a charming girl, quite unspoilt, and every inch a sport, and we hope Lord Francis will prove worthy of her.

* * *

German Admirals no better than German Generals.

The public appears to be very sane over this war, but it gets potty sometimes. There was the case of the Captain of the *Emden*. Some of the misguided folk in this country would have given him a banquet at the Guildhall if they had had the power. Yet, as I showed clearly enough in these columns, Captain von Muller's suddenly-won reputation for "gallantry" was all bunkum, and that he only played the gentleman when absolutely compelled by circumstances, and, even then, he didn't play as an English gentleman would have done!

Now there is the case of Admiral Count von Spee. He won a considerable victory over the British in the Pacific when he sank the *Good Hope* and the *Monmouth*, and any criticism of his conduct on that occasion would have looked like sour grapes, or the carping of the defeated, so I left Von Spee alone, to meet with his just reward from the next British Admiral whom he encountered. And now he has got it, and I can speak freely without the charge of rancour or national ill-feeling. And Admiral Von Spee, though a German Count, was no gentleman!

As you are aware, Admiral Sir Christopher Craddock went down with all his men, and of the 1,654 sailors on board the *Good Hope* and the *Monmouth* not a soul was saved! Now, if Admiral Von Spee had been a gentleman instead of a German, a Hun, and a cur, would he not have sailed over the spot and saved some at least of the thousand-odd British tars who for hours were struggling in the water? Of course he would! However, he has now met with his deserts, and we can only hope that when he also found himself struggling beneath the waves he realised his crime in not going to the rescue of the men of the ill-fated *Good Hope* and *Monmouth*!

* * *

Why Spain Keeps So Quiet.

The way some of the royaltics are being chased about in order to find a neutral bed is real funny. There is Prince Jaime of Bourbon. His father was the late Don Carlos, who caused the Carlist wars in Spain, in consequence of his brother, King Ferdinand, altering the law of succession so that his little daughter by his fourth wife could come to the Spanish throne. Ever since the two Alfonsos have been in possession at Madrid, the Carlists have been exiles, and the Carlist cause is now represented by Don Jaime, who has generally lived in Austria, at a castle at Frohsdorf. Recently Don Jaime

Drill Sergeant (complaints having been made as to the weakness of his voice): "Now, all those who can't hear me, say so before I begin to speak."

THE DANGERS OF WAR.

so far failed in gratitude to the old Emperor Francis Joseph as to issue an appeal to the Carlists to give their sympathies to the Allies of Great Britain. This was truly a mad thing to do, for the sympathies of the Carlists don't count for much either way, seeing that Spain stands right out of the trouble, in the sure and certain hope of keeping her power in Morocco so long as she lets well alone.

But Don Carlos was always doing silly things, and apparently the son is not much wiser than the sire. So they shut Don Jaime up close in his castle, and then His Royal Highness appealed to the Austrian Emperor for forgiveness on account of his having had to say something about the war as an ex-officer of the Russian Army. Francis Joseph received him in audience at the Hofburg, but refused to be gracious. However, Don Jaime persisted, and, after filling many reams of appeals for clemency, has finally been allowed to leave the country, and he is now in Switzerland, where, unless our knowledge of him is strangely at fault, he will endeavour to create all the trouble he can. It is the peculiar privilege of pretenders to take advantage of other folks' troubles to get their own back. In times of peace pretenders are usually a source of mirth.

* * *

Parson-Baronet's Life-Long Doubts of His Legitimacy.

The famous Slingsby baby will have the satisfaction all his life of knowing that the question of his paternity was thrashed out before he was old enough to suffer under any doubts about it. This has not always been the good fortune of people who were born under "suspicious circumstances." There was old Sir John Twisden, for instance, who died last week, aged ninety, and who had doubts about his being a baronet at all for over eighty years of his life. Sir John was a conscientious, godly old parson, and a man of scholarly attainments, as his Professorship of Mathematics at the Staff College for nearly thirty years demonstrated. Still, that missing birth certificate occasioned him life-long qualms. The story begins in 1762, when the baronet of that day, Sir Roger Twisden, heard that his eldest son, a lieutenant in the Royal Navy, had fallen in love with a wench at Portsea, named Mary Kirk, and had taken up his abode with her. The baronet promptly cut his son off with a shilling, and when he died in 1772 his *younger* son took up the title.

* * *

Oldest Lady Litigant On Record!

The erring Lieutenant Twisden died young, so did his lady-love, but they left several children, and one of them was John Twisden, who became the father of the baronet who died last week. Not till he was eighty-five was his mind set at rest as to his right to call himself eleventh baronet of Bradbourne in Kent, and then his sister, Miss Emily Twisden, who had got to the age of ninety-five, went into court to ask that her grandfather's union with Mary Kirk should be decided as a legitimate marriage.

Then it was proved that old Sir Roger's younger son, who had become "Sir" John Papillion Twisden, was never a baronet at all; that the erring lieutenant's children had all been born in Colliers Rents, White Street, Southwark, and been baptised there; that there they had been "churched," and that "Sir" John Papillion Twisden saw to the up-bringing of his dead brother's brats, knowing full well that they were the true heirs to the title and estates. No marriage certificate of the lieutenant's marriage has ever been discovered, but the Judge decided that the pair were "man and wife," and so the now-deceased baronet had the gratification of getting his title authenticated before he died. As the title is one of the oldest in the Baronetage (it having been created by King James I., in the year in which that needy Sovereign initiated the Order, 1611) it is a title well worth preserving. Old Sir John Twisden is now succeeded by his son, John Ramskill Twisden.

LIVELY LITTLE LEADERS

SPYING ON SOLDIERS' WIVES.

The Government and the War Office have not done so badly, as a whole, in their methods of handling all the difficulties that were bound to crop up in the biggest thing in wars in which we have ever been engaged. But they have certainly come a cropper over the wretched, fat-headed, slanderous, insinuating, revolting, scandalous circular which has recently been issued in the matter of the police and soldiers' wives. My blood has boiled, in a minor sort of way, on several occasions since war was declared, boiled, I mean, on account of the way in which the humbler ranks of the Army have been treated in matters of pay, allowances, clothing, accommodation, and so on. But I have largely held my peace, because at this crucial moment in our history one wants to restrain criticism as much as is honestly possible. But the limit has been reached in this dastardly matter of the wives of our soldiers. And if my respected editor will allow me to say so, I am going to say this: That, patriot as I hope I am, I would rather see England at the bottom of the sea than allow myself to believe for a fraction of a second that the wives of our "Tommies" deserve the repulsive, insulting, damning insinuations regarding their morality or immorality that are contained in the recent circular issued by the Home Office. If this is the latest scientific method of up-to-date State interference, of semi-Socialism, of grandmotherly twaddle, of Pharisaical flapdoodle, then for God's sake let us get back to the simple and honourable methods of other days. It is almost impossible to control one's language in such a matter. And, whoever it was among our illuminating statesmen who first conceived the idea, and had the ghastly impudence to put it into execution, of appointing the police to spy upon the habits of the wives of our soldiers at the front, all I can say is, God help him when his name becomes public after the war, and he goes down to his constituency to give an account of the blithering idiocy with which he has tackled affairs of State.

It makes me sick, with a wretched physical nausea that is only less repulsive than this damnable Home Office circular, to think of the "Tommies," with whom I have fought in past days, and their wives, whom I know to be as good and noble in the vast majority as any of the bloated plutocrats or the blooded aristocrats of England, being treated in this libellous manner. I am not inferring anything against our aristocracy—don't think that. Our aristocracy is fighting and dying to-day as perhaps no aristocracy in the world has ever fought and died. But I do say this: That if you are going to bring this war down to a question of morals, then let all be treated alike. Field-Marshals and Generals, Colonels and Captains, Subalterns and "Tommies." Let all their wives be spied on. Let them all be inspected. Let them all be compelled to report to the police. Let them all be made to tell the Home Secretary and his miserable myrmidons how much whisky they drink, how many men they kiss, the precise amount of morality they have got, and the exact amount of immorality that is theirs. We believe, or we profess to believe, in equality. Very well. Let us have a bit of it in this matter. And until we do have it (which we never shall in a million years), let us have done with all these lying insinuations about our soldiers and our soldiers' wives and sweethearts. Let us demand the immediate withdrawal of this infamous circular. Or else let us cease to call ourselves Englishmen, and cut ourselves adrift once and for all from the gospel of liberty and justice and honour in which we were born and bred.

Ah, if our Government, instead of spying upon our soldiers' wives, and insulting those who are to be the mothers of the British Army of the future, would only get a little of the romance and heroism of these terrible days into their mean little statesman-souls, what a national recruiting we might have! Thousands and thousands of British soldiers are now sleeping their last, long sleep on the fair fields of France. Thousands of British sailors have, during the last few months, gone down to the sea in ships, never to return. And still our troops go marching on. And we who have not the opportunity of fighting will perhaps be not far from the straight, strong path if we see to it that honour and glory, not doubt and mistrust, are given to those who shed their blood for their country, and to the women who sacrifice all that woman holds dear on the battle-fields of Empire. And I think it is, above all things, the duty of us journalists to-day to stick up for our soldiers and their kith and kin. We can tell to the people of England nothing that they do not know of the devotion to King and country of the women of England, who, at a time such as this give their sons and their brothers and their husbands to the Empire that they love. But we journalists can put down our little tribute in black and white, in the face of such a lying circular as that to which I have referred. It is our privilege and our duty to do so. And that is what I would like to do to-day. Tribute to what? Men marching and fighting in the bloody trenches, men steaming and sweating on the high seas in the cause of patriotism. Women slaving in thought and deed for the comfort and welfare of their soldier men, in a cause that should appeal to every God-like instinct of humanity. That is the picture that I see in the lives of the dead heroes and the living heroines who line the memory of Englishmen at this sad yet glorious moment of our history. And by the side of a picture like that it revolts me, as an Englishman, to see in our methods of every day government even a suggestion of a secret police. And I make bold to prophesy that rather than stand such an infamous thing the women of England will rise in their wrath and sweep from power the stupid statesman who has sought the safety of his country in the calumniation of his country's women.

JONATHAN GRUB STRETE.

"OH, WILLIE, WE HAVE MISSED YOU."

Oh, Willie, we have missed you,
  You promised you would come
To wake up dull old London town
  With goose steps, band, and drum.
You promised you would shew us how
  Your "cultured" Germans love,
And from your Zeppelins would throw
  Down blessings from above.

Oh, Willie, we *still* miss you!
  Can it be that further thought
Makes you afraid your English raid
  Would surely come to nought?
But we don't forget you, Willie,
  That would be a grievous sin,
And since you cannot come to us,
  We'll meet you—in Berlin.

R. H. CURTIS.

A courtship will often sail smoothly with a heavy swell.

* * *

A doctor is not necessarily a quack because his lady patients refer to him as a duck.

* * *

Fluid gold is declared to be a sure cure for typhoid. It looks like a sovereign remedy, anyway.

* * *

One of the most convenient ways of pruning one's genealogical tree is to cut out one's poor relations.

* * *

A German brewery has obtained General von Hindenburg's permission to name a special brew "Hindenburg's Drops of Victory." We suspect that beer will taste very bitter if it is not quickly drunk.

WHO, WHY, WHEN AND WHERE.

LITTLE QUESTIONS FOR PROMINENT PEOPLE.

How many hundreds of pounds a week the big pubs. (like the "Angel" at Islington, the "Falcon" at Clapham Junction, and the "Telegraph," at Shepherd's Bush) are losing per week owing to the slump in beer and the early closing?

* * *

Whether a new Budget will not have to be introduced during the next few months in order to save the situation?

* * *

And whether Mr. Lloyd George will ever get his £350,000,000 without entirely new taxation?

* * *

Whether the triumph of B11 is not a tremendous feather in the cap of Sir Percy Scott, who thinks Dreadnoughts are useless (comparatively speaking) beside the nimble submarine?

* * *

How the girls find their way out of H.M.S. Crystal Palace after twelve o'clock midnight?

* * *

Whether Lord Huntingfield approves of his neice's engagement to young Borrett, of Saxmundham?

* * *

Whether the Moslems will erect Aga Khan into the place formerly filled by the Sultan of Turkey in the Caliphate, now that the latter has lost caste?

* * *

Whether the Duke of Leeds will not be able to give the Tynesider Naval Volunteers some good sport on his yacht now that he has taken them in charge?

* * *

Whether it is not a very fortunate circumstance that the war left two very distinguished Russians in this country, whose friendliness with Queen Alexandra and King George is certain to prove triumphant over any diplomatic squabbles which might arise?

* * *

And whether the Grand Duke Michael and the Grand Duchess George of Russia are not both highly romantic and charming people?

* * *

If a certain high churchman, well known in Society, was not very much taken back by Kitchener's curt refusal to allow him to go to the front?

* * *

If Mr. Bernard Shaw has yet discovered who sent him the parcel containing a jester's cap and bells?

The Major: "That girl, my boy, is the descendant of a great family."
The Nut: "Yes, and from what the other girls say she is still descending."

Why a certain well-known actress has just sold her famous string of pearls and replaced it with an imitation one?

* * *

If the Four Hundred Club has not been doing remarkably well of late? And if some of the other night clubs are not beginning to wish they hadn't shown the "white feather" quite so soon?

* * *

If the East Ham Special Constables are duly grateful for the smart service hats supplied to them by Sir John Bethell, M.P.? And if the M.P. got his idea out of a comic opera?

* * *

Why a certain lady of title has taken her two unmarried daughters to the Hydro at Buxton? And if she hopes to find husbands for them out of the two hundred invalided officers now staying in the district?

* * *

How are the officers of the Sportsman's Battalion getting on with their new *chef*?

* * *

Why have they shattered another of our cherished illusions by suggesting that the scene between Edward III. and the Countess of Salisbury, when the Order of the Garter was instituted, "probably never happened"?

* * *

Whether Marshal Von der Goltz's visit to Stamboul will haply make a better fighting-machine of the Turkish soldier than the boasted German "organisation" that got the Turks such a jolly good licking from the Bulgars in 1912?

* * *

Whether the Kaiser prefers striking the lyre to facing the music, and whether he *really* wept because the Hungarian Prime Minister pulled his nose?

* * *

Is our Government helping the good cause of "spreading the light" (of intervention) in Italy, and won't it be a glorious moment when the Italians *have* to join in?

* * *

The identity of the wounded hero who was being marched up and down the Strand in the pouring rain by his admiring womenfolk last Wednseday?

TABLOID TOPICS.

The Turks have decided to raise a "camel corps." Have they got the hump already?

* * *

The German submarines that went fishing at Dover apparently didn't catch a single soul.

* * *

The Kaiser's illness has been variously diagnosed. We suggest an attack of "Plus Russie."

* * *

We hardly like the force of Women Police Volunteers. Surely women were intended for pressing.

* * *

"The Storm in the Teacup" is the title of a new book. Inspired, no doubt, by the latest tax on tea.

* * *

Some of the very "doggiest" of the k-nuts have joined the Flying Corps—become sky-terriers, in fact.

* * *

Herr Ballin, of Hamburg, with his periodical predictions of England's downfall, is becoming a Ballinuisance.

* * *

It is reported that in the course of their recent fighting, the Russians took Shertsoff. Warm work, evidently.

* * *

The Crown Prince copies his erratic sire in travelling about all over the shop. He may fitly be dubbed the Wandering Junior.

* * *

Mr. Zangwill has written a new play entitled "Too Much Money." It is a flight of imagination of which few of us are capable.

* * *

The dogs of war:—"Wanted, a couple 14in. Beagles for a formation of the British Expeditionary Force in France" (*Times* advt.).

* * *

M. Take Jonescu, the Roumanian ex-minister:—"It is certain that Roumania will join the entente." But when will it Take Jones'-cue?

* * *

The Germans, with all their boasted transport organisation, have taken almost as long to reach Calais from Berlin, as we used to do from London in *pre*-war days.

* * *

So the Kaiser, or his friend the Sultan, has persuaded the Dancing Dervishes to lend a hand—or foot. At last the conquest of the whirled has been achieved.

* * *

We applaud the action of the Lewisham residents who have refused to change the name of their Berlin Road. As we shall soon be in occupation of Berlin, one road more or less will not make much difference.

* * *

"The provision of clubs for the wives of soldiers and sailors is going steadily forward," we read. We presume they need the weapons to defend themselves against the nasty insinuations contained in the new "circular."

* * *

We presume that an advertisement noticed the other day in a morning newspaper—"Two revolutional minders wanted at once"—emanated from the All-Highest, who has doubtless got his eye on possible eventualities.

—

EDITORIAL NOTE.

The original drawings of illustrations which have appeared in "Modern Life" are for sale. Prices on application to the Editor.

OVERHEARD ON THE 'PHONE.

Mrs. Spiffingham Smith fairly shook with indignation. Had ever fair wife been more foully treated! To think—but words failed her. To-morrow would be the twenty-fifth anniversary of her wedding. Here she in the gladness of her youthful, innocent heart had rung up her husband on the telephone to arrange a matinée in honour of the great occasion. The Postmaster-General and the telephone girl (hussy) had between them managed to connect three subscribers together. One was she, one was her husband, and the other—what a revelation!

There was Mr. Spiffingham Smith talking in the most familiar terms to a woman! That was bad enough, but, worst of all, the wires were buzzing so that she could only hear very little of the conversation. This, of course, was obviously, she decided between gasps, a conspiracy between the brute and the telephone girl.

But, ah! what was that? The irate lady listened intently, and words came following faintly on the throbbing wires.

This is what she heard:—

> Yes (buzz) dear, meet me (buzz), Richmond Terrace (buzz, buzz), eight o'clock (buzz) to-night. I will bring the money (buzz, buzz, buzz).

That was enough. Bang down went the receiver, and bang down to the town went the wife to purchase a dog whip. Something long and thin, with some metal at the end, she said to the saddler. On her way home she enquired the trains to Richmond.

Eight o'clock that night found Mrs. Spiffingham Smith crouching behind a tree on the high gravelled walk overlooking the Thames at Richmond. The place was crowded, but the night was dark. The lady was also a trifle shortsighted, and several well-meaning old gentlemen narrowly escaped an undeserved thrashing did they but know it.

Just as the clocks struck ten Mrs. Spiffingham Smith, angrier and colder than ever, thought she espied her husband's tubby little figure in the distance.

Creeping stealthily from behind the tree, she grasped her dogwhip firmly, and with thumping heart and twitching lips advanced to the charge.

Nearly half the distance had been covered in three-foot paces when the woman who took her marriage so seriously heard a step in the gravel just behind. Simultaneously a strong arm settled on her shoulder.

"How dare you!" she gasped, and swung round to discover that a tall and particularly well-built policeman had caught her in a grip of iron.

"That's all right, ma'am," he grinned. "We are not a goin' to let you get at the Right Honourable Charles Peakingfeast—not to-night. Time you left these 'ere Cabinet ministers alone."

"But I am a respectable woman—what you do mean?" she demanded.

"So are several of you Suffragettes—and, besides, what's that whip doin' in your pocket? Anyway," he continued firmly, "we have orders to conduct you militants to the railway station, and not to leave hold of yer until you are safely in the train. So come alon' o' me."

Ten minutes later the two, to save publicity, were speeding along to the station in a taxi. Arrived there, the policeman conducted her to the platform, and discreetly withdrew to a safe distance until she had entered the train and was on her way home.

Arrived there the servant who opened to her imperious knock informed her that "Master" had arrived home at six o'clock.

And sure enough there he was in the dining-room, stretched in his most comfortable chair, and contentedly puffing a big cigar.

On the table was a large oil painting. It was labelled "Richmond Terrace."

"Yes," said the husband, apparently not noticing his wife's dishevelled appearance. "Charming, isn't it? I got it from Miss Petchwerp—you know, the only lady R.A.—to celebrate to-morrow's anniversary. Fixed up the deal on the 'phone this morning."

E. B. INCE.

F L L

"MODERN LIFE'S" GALLERY OF WAR CELEBRITIES.

No. 1.—Lord Kitchener.

AUBREY FINDING HIMSELF.

The Hon. Aubrey Harrington is a dear lad, but his susceptibility to feminine beauty has many times made me, his unofficial guardian, tear my hair in excited moments; so much so in fact that, fearful of baldness, I have taken to tearing his when occasion demands. Half the chorus ladies of London know the laddie, and the other half would dearly like to. "I know I'm an ass," he'll say, with disarming frankness, after he's done something rash, and paid for it, "but I really thought she was It, you know. Like the lady of the bally song, 'She had too kind a heart e'er to deceive me.' Honest, old chum, I couldn't 'a' believed a girlie with eyes like hers . . . ."

But when Aubrey discovered that Kitchener wanted men, he measured his chest with an ebony ruler, made some lightning calculations, then consumed a brandy-and-soda to silence his triumphantly-throbbing heart. Afterwards he called on me.

"Old boy, old boy," he sobbed, "I've found I'm a man within the meanin' of the Act."

"Who told you?" I asked suspiciously.

"An ebony ruler and Kitchener's chest measurements. He wants me, old son."

At which I was sorry for the old thing. "Now, look here, Aubrey, for heaven's sake don't do anything rash. Let's have it out. What are you going to do?"

"Join the Army, my dear. 'K. of K.' no longer needs 100,000 men at once—99,999 will do."

"Perhaps he'll change the posters if you ask him," I suggested. "But you are a silly ass, anyway. D'you really think the *Daily Mirror* could publish your photo, and head it 'A Typical Tommy'? No, laddie, you'll need to alter your face a little. F'r instance, that monocle. Cast it to the winds."

"What! my monocle? I say! But you don't really mean it?"

"I do."

"Then there's nothing doing," said Aubrey firmly; "that's too thick. Anything but that. I'll paint my face like a bally red Indian's if you like, but I will discard my monocle never, never, never. I heard that last bit from the pater," he explained, seeing my astonishment at his unexpected eloquence. "Hang it all, though! I must and will stick to my distinguished appearance."

"Then if you won't even give up a beastly eyeglass for your King and Country," said I bitterly, "you'll have to be an officer."

"Oh, all right," said Aubrey cheerfully, "I'll just be one."

* * * * *

Time passed. Fact. I could now help to form a platoon on the left—at the 'alt, too—present, slope, and secure arms like greased lightning, and go through all the other curious evolutions necessary nowadays before starting on a trip to Berlin; so that it was seldom the drill-instructor had occasion to remark pleasantly: "You, there! Yes, you! Don't use the bleedin' rifle as a damned crutch, you. . . ."

On the whole, therefore, I was fairly pleased with the world. Then the bombshell burst. I learned that Aubrey, who is in the same regiment as myself—only he's an officer; I'm not—was to be put in command of my platoon. Aubrey in charge of a platoon! I felt that another special phrase should be inserted in the Litany.

In due course he arrived. On the parade-ground he spoke to me. I gave him a magnificent salute—you should hear my military boots click—and Aubrey spoke. "You needn't do that, you ass," he said. "Anyway, you look silly when you do."

"Yes sir."

"Oh, chuck it. Where can we have a drink?"

"For heaven's sake, Aubrey, be sensible. I can't walk round with you as though I were your nurse. Honestly, you need one. And don't speak to me too often." Then I explained laboriously the difference between a private and a commissioned officer in his Majesty's Army, and told him to be a good lad.

Next day he stood in front of us, the sergeant by his side. He opened his mouth, closed it, and opened it again, all in that affecting way of his. The men saw they had a novelty in officers, and got ready to grin.

"Fohm —— By the way, have they been numbered off yet?"

"Yes, sir."

"Platoon, on the left, fohm fours. Fohm fours! Right!"

Naturally there was an unholy mess. When we had sorted ourselves out again, Aubrey looked at us reprovingly.

"I say," said he, "that was awf'lly rotten, y'know. You'll jolly well have to do the thing better'n that, my lads!"

All that morning he ordered us to perform movements that were impossible of performance, which, as Euclid rightly observed, is absurd, and in the end everyone of the men under his charge would willingly have murdered him gratuitously. General feeling was expressed as follows: "Eh! he's a nice soft lad. Fancy saluting a thing like that!"

We were digging trenches after dinner—have you ever eaten stew, stew, stew for weeks on end? That's a private aside, wrung from an anguished soul—and Aubrey came to watch us work.

It had been raining heavily, the trenches were muddy, and certainly it was the last time on earth that Aubrey should have got his feet entangled with his sword. In any case, he did. His sword proved to be stronger than his legs, and he toppled over into the trench, which was fully five feet deep. There was a nasty crack when he landed all in a heap at the bottom, the scabbard of his sword mixed up with his limbs, but as we helped him out, placing him upright once more, we howled with laughter. All his pretty clothes, his monocle, and, most of all, his dear face was smeared with mud. He looked so unhappy that the platoon rejoiced *en masse*. They roared until they were helpless, taking advantage of Aubrey's strange silence. At last he spoke.

"Laugh, will you, you beasts!" said he.

After he had cleaned himself somewhat he marched us away, holding all the while his left arm limp. It was plain he had hurt it slightly.

Then he made us wheel, wheel, wheel, and wheel again, wheel in sections, form in sections, form platoon again, on the right, on the left, form once more in sections, wheel still again, our rifles continuously at the slope; and so on endlessly, with never a breathing space, until we were tired in both body and mind—stiff with exercise. It was a Machiavellian revenge.

At last he dismissed us, but ere we could rush away—"Laugh, will you, you beasts!" said Aubrey indignantly. And with one accord we did.

Next morning, on the notice board, we read something that made us all rather proud of the Hon. Aubrey Harrington.

It was set down that Lieut. ——— would in future take charge of No. 3 Platoon until such time as Lieut. the Hon. Aubrey Harrington's broken arm was made whole again.

To refer disparagingly to Aubrey now in our Company is to ask for serious trouble—and be sure of getting it.

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ROUGE AND RUFFLES.

Flesh Fairies.

I see that in spite of the war, those winter flowers, pantomimes, are to bloom as usual this year. So that it will be possible once again to wander for a while and a consideration—into the Garden of Make-Believe. Already behind the scenes quite commonplace people are busy turning into princesses and fairies and giants, while dream-castles are in course of erection under the prosaic knock of the stage-carpenter's hammer. I often wonder who it is that pantomimes really appeal to? Surely even a modern kiddie must be bored by the up-to-date patter of an eccentric comedian and the lengthy love-songs of the principal lady, while the glitter and glare, pleasing at first, soon pall. And then think of the disillusion. Every child has carried in his or her mind a faithful presentment of his or her favourites in fiction. Fancy the shock of finding Cinderella a matronly lady with a cold in her head, or the Sleeping Beauty a thin person with a squeak and the wrong coloured hair. Then again, how can the real grown-ups take a passionate interest in a love-scene between two ladies who are probably deadly enemies "off," or lend more than a languid attention to the hoary songs and jokes which are served up every year? And yet—people do go to pantomimes. That is an indisputable fact. I probably shall myself, in spite of the fact that I haven't an illusion about a fairy left. It's an awful mistake in life to get introduced to the people one has always wanted to know. The latest Princess to publish her "Memoirs," remarks that she had dreamt Miss Marie Corelli to be tall and slender and dreamy-eyed, and was disappointed to find her a short, stout person. I myself have met various celebrities at home, and found them all without distinction much more agreeable in the spirit. To keep friends with one's heroes, it seems to me that one must never meet them in the flesh.

She: "I think, Jim, one should try to love one's enemies."
He: "Why, then, I shall declare war on you at once!"

Beauty's Ugliness.

Do you believe that ugliness is simply the negative of beauty? In every beautiful thing there is a certain amount of ugliness. Somebody has sent me this as a new thought. But I don't see where the novelty comes in. Everybody knows that even beauties are not beautiful all the time. I remember a French writer [illegible] dare to tell a woman exactly what she looked like in the early morning. This may not be complimentary, but then true things seldom are. Beauty is dependent upon so many outside things for its reputation that the most fervid believer in Eve is driven perforce to the conclusion that there must be a little substratum of ugliness somewhere. You will remember that famous beauty of the last Napoleon's days, La Belle Castiglione, who lived in dark rooms from the moment her charms began to fade, and all the face washes in the world couldn't prevent her ugliness coming through; that ill-fated Empress of Austria, obsessed by the same fear; Madame Récamier, who knew she was no longer beautiful when the little sweep-boys turned no more to stare at her in the streets—Oh! I could quote you dozens more examples of pretty women who knew about their fundamental ugliness. Still, what matter so long as one has a good time while the beauty lasts? It would be a funny old world if we all shut ourselves up into nunneries and waited for the first grey hair. I don't believe in being gloomy. To enjoy life as long as we can and as wisely as we can is surely the best philosophy, and if ugliness, like Death, waits like a camel at everybody's gate, well, we shall have to let him in, that's all.

* * *

Colour, Please!

Whenever I get tired of journalism, or, what is more probable, journalism gets tired of me, I think I shall go in for house-decoration. Both the insides and outsides of our houses leave so much to be desired. (I am not talking, of course, of the art gallery of a Pierpont Morgan). But—oh! the long, grey rows of houses that crop up everywhere like mushrooms in London's streets and—oh—the dreariness of the average London drawing-room. I have spoken before of the gay-painted houses in Continental towns, making of every street a flower-garden and a magnet for the sun. I am afraid, however, we shall never be able to educate the great B.P. into the value of a chaotic mass of colour. For instance, if I painted my house a brilliant emerald green and outlined all the sills with broad streaks of yellow, like splashes of sunshine, and placed yellow bowls of yellow daffodils or tulips outside all the windows, passers-by would certainly think I was mad, till they passed on a wet day, when my green and yellows would smile at them out of all the surrounding grey like a cheerful friend. And my dining-room, instead of being the usual red, would have turquoise walls, with a frieze of little white-winged boats and sea-green curtains and green rush chairs—it would be a kind of dining-room no family could possibly quarrel in—even at breakfast; while at night it would be lit by a light that would glow inside its lemon shade like a full moon. And there would be colour, colour everywhere all over the rest of the house. You will see how very unfashionable I am, considering that black-and-white houses are the very latest thing; in fact, the more like mausoleums they look, the better. But then, thank heaven! I'm not fashionable, and haven't got to sit in a Futurist's tomb. Give me Diogenes' tub any day instead, so long as there was a Persian carpet and a book of Swinburne's poems at the bottom of it.

Louise Heilgers.

BY THE WAY.

Is the War Office's admirable idea of having military bands to perform in Trafalgar Square during these strenuous times being attended by quite all the success one could have wished for it? In other words, does it attract exactly the class that it was intended to attract—the "recruiting" class? A casual stroll into the Square a few mornings ago revealed the fact that a military band was playing to a scanty audience, mainly composed of grimy urchins, nursemaids, other females, and the everyday lounger, a kind of Phil May crowd, in fact. Which is not as it should be, what?

* * *

While trusting to weather the storm ourselves, we can't help feeling sorry for some of the journals that haven't. From far-off Boston (U.S.A.) comes the final issue, "at least for the present," of Boston *Truth*. The war in Europe, states the editorial swan-song, has "cut the paper's income in halves, making it impossible to continue." Mr. George Conroy adds that he considers *Truth* has died "game," "owing no man a dollar which it is unable to pay," and he is mordantly witty on the subject of "its chief mourners."

* * *

Another and "bigger" editorial friend in Boston—McGregor Jenkins, of the *Atlantic Monthly*, tells me that out of 12,000 manuscripts submitted to him annually he is only able to accept about 250! This certainly is a small proportion, though I don't know if it quite justified the following from a would-be contributor: "Your articles are weak and vapid, your essays nonsense, your stories utterly without interest, and your poetry rotten. If you would listen to reason, and try to learn how to make a magazine, but you Easterners know it all, so h——! What's the use?"

YULETIDE DREAMS.

No farther from the office of MODERN LIFE than the site of old Covent Garden Church, you may find an epitaph to help you elucidate a newspaper humourist's comparison of the captain of the *Emden* with that courtly knight of the road, Claude Duval. The point of the comparison, of course, is that Captain Von Müller has such a gallant "way with him," while the festive Claude was known to let many a fine lady go unrobbed save of a kiss or a dance. Duval departed this life at Tyburn in 1670, and the Covent Garden epitaph said: "Here lies Duval—reader, if male thou art Look to thy purse—if female, to thy heart."

* * *

"You must flirt with the critics if you wish to get on in this business, my dear," remarked the sharp-tongued Mrs. X., leading lady at the old Frivolity. "What a rippin' notice you got in the *Daily Lyrebird* this morning, darling!" retorted the amiable Miss Z., leading lady of the new Quinquennial. Then they kissed.

* * *

The death of A. E. W. Collins at the front has removed one who enjoyed the unique fame of having scored 628 runs "not out"—still a long way the "best on record"—in a school match at Clifton in 1870. Oddly enough, Mr. Collins never had any subsequent career as a cricketer. He made his great score on five afternoons in a total of 836, the next highest score being "Mr. Extras" with 46. He also took ten of the opponents' wickets in their two feeble innings. It is a coincidence that E. F. S. Tylecote's 404 in 1868 was made at Clifton College.

* * *

Is the General Conneau who was among the officers received by his Majesty in France, anything to the Dr. Conneau who connived at the escape of Prince Louis, afterwards Napoleon III., from the fortress of Ham? Dr. Conneau, who was the Prince's devoted servant, contrived a dummy figure, which remained in the prisoner's bed, unsuspected, for hours after he had got clear away.

* * *

About this time last year I had the interesting experience of meeting the much-talked-of Herr Krupp and his wife in Switzerland. They were staying at the Kulm Hotel, St. Moritz, and my introduction came about through an auction-bridge party arranged by the Princess Sophia of Austria, who was also a guest at the hotel. The Ironmaster was one of my opponents at my first table, and I must admit that the impression which he made upon me was a distinctly favourable one. But perhaps that's because he is a Krupp only in name, for his wife, on the contrary, was an exceptionally disagreeable woman, tall, stout, unattractive, and possessing the most outrageous taste in clothes. Each evening her toilette was made a topic of amused discussion by the rest of her sex.

* * *

Talking of Princess Sophia, I have often wondered why that lady of so varied and fascinating a career has never given her experiences to the world in the form of a book. The intimate friend of an Emperor, a Prince, and quite a number of Europe's most striking personalities, both in the diplomatic and artistic worlds, her reminiscences should prove exceedingly interesting reading. Although approaching middle age, she is still a beautiful and charming woman, with much

personal magnetism. Of late years she seems to have grown tired of the men of intellect and genius, the poets, the statesmen, the artists, of whom she was once the lodestar, and has stooped to cultivate the attentions of those of a younger and more athletic generation. For instance, at St. Moritz last winter, there was a certain handsome English youth—still at Cambridge—upon whom she expended quite a disproportionate amount of her time. And the boy took no pains to hide his infatuation from the amused and pitying eyes of onlookers. Let's hope he is not still breaking his heart over her.

* * *

The new and charming residence which Mlle. Gaby Deslys has just acquired in Kensington bears the ill-fated and much-maligned number "thirteen," and I am told that her agent had at first been apprehensive that, suitable as the house undoubtedly was, superstition might prevent the fascinating Gaby from deciding upon it. He was much relieved to discover her completely indifferent to such trifles. "Why, if anything, I consider thirteen rather a lucky number," she replied to his anxious enquiry. "The nicest thing that ever happened to me was on the day I picked up a silver brooch composed of the letters '13.'"

* * *

And now—would you believe it!—in the Christmas number of the *Pelican* Miss Deslys says, in telling the story of her fall into the Seine last July, and of her rescue by Max Linder, "I am rather superstitious, and I remarked at the time we were thirteen at dinner, and that I was sure something was going to happen, for whether the number 13 is fortunate or otherwise to most people, it is always very unlucky to me." Did you ever know a young lady to change her mind so definitely about anything? But I had forgotten it is a woman's privilege to change her mind with as much ease as she changes her frock, and Gaby seems to be an adept at both. But I think she is making a mistake when she says that there were *thirteen* guests present at the memorable dinner party. If she recalls the affair *very* carefully, I think she will recollect that a certain well-known Parisian journalist did not turn up until the meal was nearly over, and that he then contented himself with perching upon the arm of the chair of one of the other guests. You could hardly call that "sitting down to the table," could you?

* * *

A few days ago three of "Kitchener's Kids" were hurriedly recalled from the drilling fields to the death-bed of their sister, Miss Patricia Stuart, who, as perhaps you will remember, made her appearance in "Joseph and His Brethren" at His Majesty's Theatre some little while back. She was only nineteen years of age, but possessed such exceptional beauty, talent and charm of manner that Sir Herbert had already predicted a brilliant future for her. Immediately after the funeral the three brothers returned to Salisbury and the business of "getting ready" to meet the Germans. There's no sentiment about war. Even the most poignant of sorrows must be hidden beneath a strictly stoical and martial exterior.

* * *

I notice that one or two of the dailies are engaged in discussing the use and abuse of the word "decimate." As it is at least the fifth time in five months that this particular controversy has arisen, might I suggest that newspapers who have space to waste might turn their attention to the word "overwhelm." I am getting quite tired of reading about overwhelming forces which never overwhelm.

* * *

The war has indeed produced a surfeit of military critics and armchair experts. One of the few who really understands his business is Hilaire Belloc, who is probably the greatest military strategist in the world. When he lectured at the Globe Theatre a few Sundays ago, dozens of staff officers flocked to hear him. Some came all the way from Scotland, and the seats could have been sold three times over. Some people paid half-a-guinea for standing room, while ten guineas could not purchase a box for Lord Esher. The lecture had to be repeated twice.

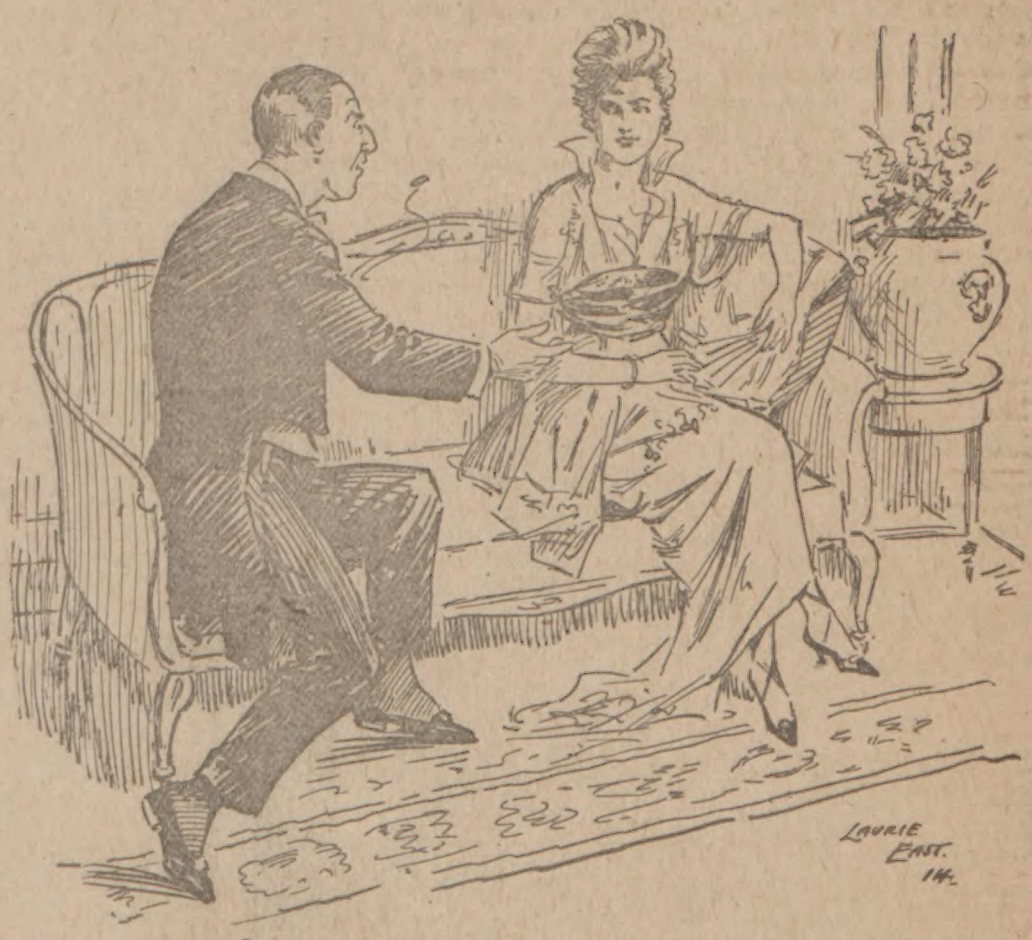
* * *

Mr. Belloc is famed in the House of Commons for his hair. One day he would come down with it neatly parted down the middle. Another day it would be divided with exquisite neatness at one side. On the morrow the parting would be on the other side. The joke was that the coiffure always ended up in the same fashion, for at the finish of a debate his hair was so unruly as often to resemble a mop.

* * *

I hear that the Archbishop of York is very sick about his little speech in which he deprecated personal attacks on the Kaiser. He has been the recipient of literally thousands of letters, and now wishes he had never opened his mouth on the subject. His Grace very rarely makes a slip, for he is a man of really exceptional ability. His chief relaxation is the stone-flagged Italian garden which he has constructed in the grounds of his palace. It is studded with rare plants, which, so it is said, the Archbishop often tends himself. One day someone will photograph him at work with his trowel.

THE LOITERER.



He: "If you refuse me I shall join the Army, and go out and get shot."
She: "Is that a promise?"

Even blunt men have their good points.

* * *

When a man marries his typist he forfeits the right to dictate to her.

* * *

It's silly to talk of a child being "good for nothing"; the modern child never is.

* * *

The woman who is in love with her own beauty is usually much given to reflection.

IN STAGELAND.

I wonder if Frederick Ross's recent achievement of playing three characters in three different plays "at once" doesn't establish another record? He was appearing in "Henry the Fourth"; as Captain Hardy, in "The Dynasts" at the Kingsway; and in "Drake" twice on Mondays! As the death-of-Nelson scene comes early in "The Dynasts," I could understand his getting round to His Majesty's for a part that comes comparatively late in "Henry IV." But I confess I don't quite "tumble" to his having been able to appear twice as Drake (a very long part), and still fit in his Kingsway engagement.

Lewis Waller's motoring accident near St. Albans might have been worse, though I understand that it is painful enough for him to be feeling pleased that he hasn't to go play-acting again until Boxing Day. On that Christmas-sy date L. W. is booked to reappear at Manchester in his favourite character of the breezy D'Artagnan in "The Three Musketeers." He pluckily insisted on fulfilling his engagement to recite at the Belgian Fund function on Sunday.

"Mon Amour," at the Oxford, is a laughable trifle, and Miss Amelia Stone and Mr. Armand Kaliss extract the last ounce of fun from it. The "argument" is peradventure a bit weak—an operatic composer who is reading the criticisms of his own work being interrupted by the entrance of a prima donna, the two of them proceed to a vast amount of singing, canoodling, etc., and that is pretty much all that the little sketch amounts to. But it serves to exasperate an idle moment.

At the Palladium, also, they present a novelty in the shape of "Full Inside," whereof the score is by Max Darewski. If it can't be affirmed that there is anything particularly coherent about its "plot," this rollicking medley effervesced with brightness and "go." Stanley Brett, Jenny Benson, the veteran Albert Chevalier, and Billy Merson with his 'horse,' were conspicuous among those contributing to the fun of the fair

I am delighted to announce that F. R. Benson is to have a Shakspearian season at the Shaftesbury—delighted, because we don't see half enough of Mr. Benson in the West End. He opens on Boxing Day in "Henry the Fifth." Comparisons are proverbially odious, so I will content myself with remarking that there is really only one Henry the Fifth on the earth to-day, and his name is Waller. Nevertheless, Mr. Benson is always interesting, and I hope he will stage "Richard the Second" ere he vacates the Shaftesbury.

"The Man Who Stayed at Home" is for the most part rare good fun, and in complete contrast to the more sombre qualities of a previous "recruiting" play, "The Cost." It is assuredly a piece to be seen, and is perfectly acted all round—but, then, you invariably get that at the Royalty. A large proportion of the fun is extracted from a series of exaggerated phases of spy-mania, with carrier-pigeons, Marconi installations, and so forth.

As Christopher, the man who never intended to enlist, Dennis Eadie is seen at his very best, and everybody knows how good that best can be. If Miss Isobel Elsom, the Royalty's new leading lady, leaves a good deal to the imagination; her rôle is not a particularly exacting one. Jean Cadell's old maid, and Ruth Mackay's female A.D.C., are both things of considerable joy. But I am by no means sure that Henry Edwards's perfect Teutonic accent and make-up as a spy-waiter, and Malcolm Cherry's heavy-villainies, are not the best individual performances in a show which you really ought to see.

Gerald Du Maurier is by way of reviving the immortal "Raffles" for the holiday season. Both it and he may count upon a warm welcome, and I do sincerely trust that there won't be any bungling or banal attempts to bring the famous burgling drama up-to-date by means of war references.

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OURSELVES AND OTHER PEOPLE.

AN INSINUATION.

May: "Young Freshleigh tried to put his arm around my waist last night."

Grace: "Tried to! Why, wasn't his arm long enough?"

* * *

CAME TO THE SAME THING.

"My mither sent me to see if you would gie her a calendar like the one ye gied to Mrs. Mackay," said a boy to the village grocer.

"Ah, but laddie," replied the grocer, "'your mither doesna get her groceries here."

"No," was the reply, "but she borrows them frae Mrs. Mackay, and Mrs. Mackay get them frae you."

* * *

MERCENARY—VERY!

Dora: "Oh, I'm in such distress of mind, and I want your advice. I am loved by three men, and I don't know which to accept."

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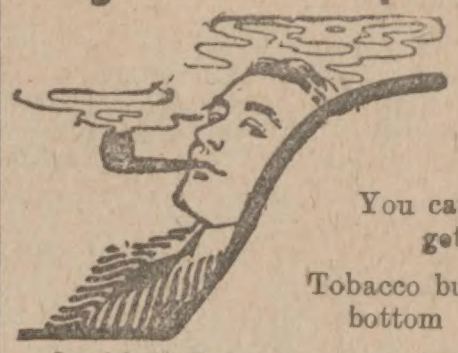

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